



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

Central Coast Region



Terry Tamminen
Secretary for
Environmental
Protection

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

February 3, 2004

Ms. Sylvia Hamilton
Perchlorate Community Advisory Group
PO BOX 886
San Martin, CA 95046

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

SLIC: 425 TENNANT AVENUE, MORGAN HILL; RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM THE PERCHLORATE COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP LETTER DATED JANUARY 14, 2004

Thank you for your letter dated January 14, 2004. We are pleased that the Perchlorate Working Group (PCAG) has been successful in its' mandate to provide community input regarding the perchlorate contamination in your community. We agree that the differences of lifestyle and activities, and the fact that groundwater provides your only water source critically impacts the quality of your lives and community. We recognized early on that community involvement would be important to finding successful solutions to Olin's perchlorate release and the community's concerns and needs arising from it. That is why we worked to form your community group. Please be aware that we consider this the most important cleanup project we are currently overseeing. We are committed to working with you, the PCAG, and various public agencies to ensure protection of groundwater quality and public health associated with this very sensitive and important issue. As we have discussed, please feel free to express the community's needs to us at any time.

Your letter presents specific requests to the Regional Board, which we would like to address. We have included your requests in *italics* with our response in regular type.

1. *Require Olin Corporation to completely define the vertical and lateral extent of the perchlorate plume by providing additional wells capable of determining basin stratigraphy that would be monitored frequently to provide valuable on-going, updated data.*

Response: This request is also included in your Letter to Elected Officials, dated January 14, 2004, specifically request 1(d). We share your concern and are working with Olin to fully delineate the plumes lateral and vertical extent. Olin is continuing to sample wells both cross and downgradient, and at different depths in order to do so. At the same time, we continue to have ongoing discussions with Olin regarding their proposed monitoring network. In light of our concerns with proper plume

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delineation, we continue to discuss monitoring needs and priorities with Olin: for example in meetings on 11/21/03, 12/9/03 and 1/13/04. We will continue to discuss plume delineation issues and require necessary well installation when needed. Lastly, our current Monitoring and Reporting Program requires Olin to sample both onsite and offsite wells on a quarterly basis. We believe this is important to long term plume monitoring. Monitoring Adequacy is re-evaluated with each quarterly report and we will require ongoing monitoring into the foreseeable future.

2. *Require Olin Corporation to prepare timely interim and long-term perchlorate remediation plans for the valley basin residents which carefully reviews, considers and reports findings on ALL possible technologies capable of perchlorate removal at the wellhead. We request these plans include a six-month timeline beginning in January 2004 with periodic updates for the duration.*

Response: This request is also included in your Letter to Elected Officials, dated January 14, 2004, in requests 1(b) and 1(c). We met with Olin on December 9, 2003 and again on January 13, 2004, to discuss a number of issues including long-term basin wide groundwater remediation and long-term water replacement plans. As you are aware, the long-term replacement water feasibility study we requested is due April 16, 2004. We are currently discussing long term basin wide groundwater cleanup plans with Olin and will certainly consider your request when negotiating submittal timelines.

3. *Require Olin Corporation to provide all PCAG members with hard copy of ALL reports, documents and plans relevant to their remediation of the perchlorate contamination.*

Response: Unfortunately we are unable to require Olin to provide hardcopies to anyone except the Regional Board. However, we have communicated this request to Olin several times and they have agreed to provide hardcopies to you, your local public library and the Santa Clara Valley Water District. While this may fall short of your request, we consider this a positive step by Olin to keep the community informed.

4. *Request that the RWQCB continue to keep PCAG apprised and involved in establishment of remediation methods and strategies being considered for the cleanup of Perchlorate. PCAG has first-hand knowledge of the effects of the perchlorate contamination on the local residents, business and property owners and, as a result, can be a very effective liaison between the problems identified, the solutions proposed and their specific benefits to the needs of the community.*

Response: We will continue to attend PCAG meetings to keep you updated, and my staff remains available to you by phone and email. We will keep you informed of

updated information as it becomes available. As you know, we update the PCAG routinely and will continue to do so. We will continue to keep you involved and updated and ask that you to continue to keep us apprised of the community's needs. We are also willing to give updates or presentations on specific issues the community is interested in. Please feel free to contact my staff listed below, to relay your specific needs. We greatly appreciate the PCAG's input.

5. *Request the RWQCB continue to keep PCAG apprised of the on-going negotiations with Olin Corporation and provide our affected community opportunity to preview and comment on all clean-up policies to be presented to Olin Corporation.*

Response: As I mentioned above, we will continue to keep the PCAG updated. As stated in a recent letter to the Santa Clara Valley Water District, we have pledged to provide the public an opportunity to review and comment on any Clean Up or Abatement Order prior to issuance, unless an emergency or urgent matter precludes this step. While this is not typical of most cleanup cases, we have decided to do this, so that we will be able to consider all comments of the PCAG, the community, and the various concerned agencies.

6. *In regards to Olin's recent Soil Feasibility Study and recognizing time is of the essence, the PCAG strongly advocates excavating and hauling the highest concentrated soils from the Tennant Site to a proper offsite facility unless Olin can demonstrate that bioremediation is a more timely and effective solution for onsite cleanup.*

Response: We discussed this matter with Olin officials during an onsite meeting on January 13, 2004 and relayed your concerns. While we cannot guarantee that excavation and hauling offsite will occur, we have asked Olin to consider your comments. We believe on-site ex-situ soil treatment may have advantages to hauling offsite. As you know, Olin has offered to come to the PCAG meeting on February 13th to discuss the Soil Feasibility Study. We believe this would be helpful and informative, and would provide the PCAG with an opportunity to ask questions about the plan.

We would like to take this opportunity to address an issues that was raised in your January 14, 2004 letter to your elected representatives that was not covered above.

- 1) *All relevant City, County, State and Federal agencies, PCAG and the polluters work together to accomplish the following:*
 - e. *Take the necessary actions to prevent the further spread of the onsite and offsite perchlorate contamination.*

Response: We are continuing to work with Olin to stop the spread of onsite and offsite perchlorate contamination. Currently, Olin has installed a groundwater extraction system that utilizes ion exchange treatment. The system will be operated to contain and remove contaminated groundwater to prevent further offsite migration. We have also required Olin to remediate site soil to remove perchlorate and will be working with them to get the plan approved and implemented. We have also been working with Olin on options for offsite remediation and will be continuing those discussions.

Thank you again for your letter. We look forward to working with you to help find solutions to the challenges facing your community during this project investigation and cleanup. Please let us know if you require assistance and we will do our best to assist you. Should you have any questions, please call me at (805) 549-3140, **David Athey** at (805) 542-4644, or Eric Gobler at (805) 549-3467.

Sincerely,



Roger W. Briggs
Executive Officer

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cc : Olin Interested Parties List

